



# THE BABBLER

April 2005

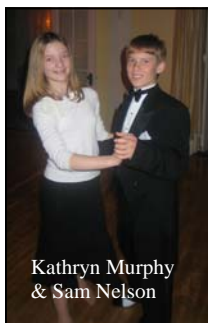
## HUNT BALL ROCKS

By Jeanne Ahrenholz

On Saturday evening, March 5, 2005, members and friends of the LLH returned to the Lafayette Club — the original venue for the first LLH Hunt Ball. That first ball featured ballroom dancing with partners attending dance classes set up in advance. In contrast, this year's band played a variety of slow and fast dances appealing to a wide range of interests. In fact, this year's band, The Mod Squad, was the highlight of the evening and arguably the best band we've ever had. Better reserve them again for next year!

Best-dressed honors go to 13-year-old Sam Nelson who arrived in tails and black and white toe cap shoes. He was constantly surrounded by adoring females. He was way cool.

Most talented honors go to Stevie Stene who sang a Norah Jones song, *I Don't Know Why*, along with the band. Wow — she was good. American Idol, watch out!



Kathryn Murphy & Sam Nelson

(Continued on page 2)



## THE LADIES OF THE IRISH HUNT

January 8-16, 2005

by Cindy Piper

### CAST OF CHARACTERS:

- ◆ Carol Brooks, Wayzata, MN
- ◆ Sherry Higham, Badminton, Gloucestershire, England
- ◆ Mary Kay Jans, Wayzata, MN
- ◆ Cindy Piper, Long Lake, MN
- ◆ Shiela Strickler, Tucson, AZ
- ◆ Sue Talalla, Watertown, MN

### A FOXHUNTING WEEK

with Willie Leahy  
Loughrea,  
County Galway,  
Ireland

It began for four of us—Carol Brooks, Mary Kay Jans, Sue Talalla and myself—at the Minneapolis airport. I started it all at the ticket counter when the agent handed us our tickets and boarding passes, calling our names. She said “Carol” and I said “Who’s Carol?” Oops! We flew to Newark for the flight to Shannon.

Shiela Strickler met us at the gate after her flight from Phoenix and we were off on this Irish adventure. It was a non-eventful flight, landing in Shannon at 7:45 a.m., Sunday morning, where we claimed our luggage and secured our minivan. Wrong... Our minivan was the standard U.S. variety and in my planning I knew it would be a squeeze for luggage and had anticipated that we would send the luggage on in a taxi. I forgot that Ireland is no longer a cheap place to travel. In the end we had 23 pieces of luggage and after some renegotiating, we rented a Mercedes mini-bus (a.k.a. Golfer’s Van). The only thing “Mercedes” about the vehicle was

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## MY JUNGLE FOXHUNT

By Jo Simonton Bolte

Jungle Foxhunt? It's not oxymoronic. My fourth foxhunting adventure with Southcreek Foxhounds in Florida began at 4 p.m. on February 2, 2005. The day was warm and overcast. Staff, hounds and a small field moved off into a dense jungle, with 10-foot palmettos, hanging vines, somber palms and cypress "knees" protruding from the swampland. It's not the hunt's favorite fixture. Sometimes staff can't get to the hounds at all. I heard they lost the entire pack there the week before. We walked single-file a good part of the time, ducking under palmettos. I was thankful for a handy horse who could jump fallen logs unseen by its rider, and avoid tripping on the cypress "knees." That was fine from 4:00 until 6:00, while it was still daylight. The pack wasn't finding much, so we decided to head back to the trailers about 5:45.

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Dena Stanchfield says the best dance was the Electric Slide. She especially enjoyed laughing at me trying to figure out how to do it as she more wisely sat out that number.

Members of the Twin Cities Polo Club filled a table. Hopefully

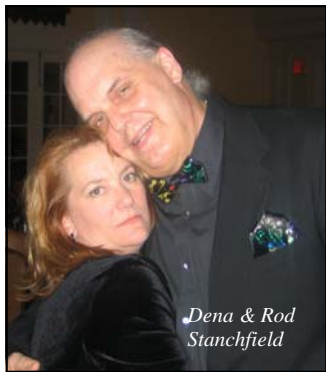


Katy Bloomquist, Jane Flanders & Wendy Powell

some of them will join us in the hunt field on a regular basis. In the future we'd like to be more inclusive of the entire equestrian community and would love to see barn tables full of prospective members.

Juniors filled two tables with a Junior Junior table and an older Junior table. We heard some of the girls held a sleepover afterwards at Kathryn Murphy's farm.

Old friends joined us to reminisce about their hunting days. George Wood attended with his wife Carol. Chuck Gehrman came stag, as did Jon Martinson. We can always use extra men – especially those who like to dance. Vickie




Dena & Rod Stanchfield

Aberg (now a land-owner) talked about hunting Lyman Wakefield's

horses in the old days and how she always got to ride the difficult ones just off the track. Beth Luther was there telling us of her recent hunting tales from England. Dave Ahrenholz got back from Equador just the day before the ball and was full of jungle stories.



Jt MFH Bridgett & Marty Paradise

Thanks to Bridgett Paradise and Dena Stanchfield, who did an enormous amount of work, for providing us with a delightful evening and a great chance to get together in the off season. 



The author, Jeanne Ahrenholz & hubby, David

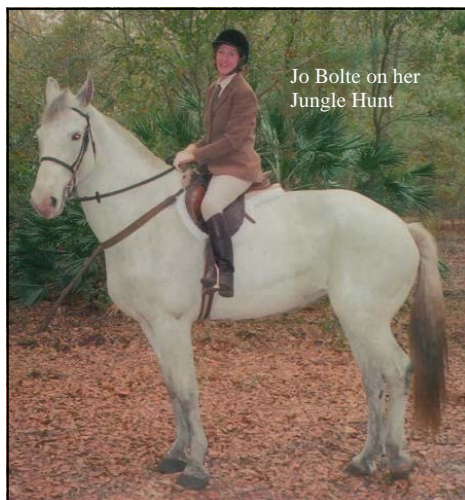
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There was some discussion among the two MFHs and huntsman about the right direction back on the "road," which was nothing more than a six-foot swath cut through the jungle. It wasn't the right direction. So we turned around. By now it was dark—pitch black with no moon—and we were lost. We walked head-to-tail to stay together. Eventually we came to water. We hadn't gone through water when we started out. I heard one of the masters say, "There's an alligator," and I honestly don't know whether or not he was kidding. One of the masters had a compass, but it wasn't much help. So we turned around—again. Finally, after two hours of being totally lost, we were told the trailers weren't far away. Soon we heard car horns honking in an attempt to help us find our way. We got back

**More hunt ball photos in the Photo Gallery!**

at 8:00 p.m., having being out for four hours—two of them in total darkness. Staff, field and all but one

hound arrived intact, and were greeted by much chiding from hunt members keeping supper warm back at the trailers. We were grateful for the wonderful hot meal and cool libations awaiting us. A master mentioned that if we hadn't found our way when we did we'd have had to stay out until daylight. YIKES! Bottom line? I'd hunt with SCF again in a heartbeat. I'm already looking forward to next year—next time.



Jo Bolte on her Jungle Hunt



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Can you guess who these two current LLH members are? (If you need to cheat, the answer is on page 10)



In The



## Masters' Pocket

By Bridgett Paradise, Jt. MFH

As we start to hear the birds returning in the early morning and the snow is slowly starting to melt away, we are reminded that spring is near. Spring is a time of renewal and rebirth. And this year, LLH will have a renewal event all our own as we wait the impending birth of new LLH puppies!! Yes, it is true—we are expecting a litter in early April. While it is always exciting to have puppies, these puppies are part of the next generation for LLH and we are really eager for their impending arrival and future addition to our pack.

Following the counsel of Melvin Poe, (Huntsman Bath County Hunt) and Dr. Marvin Beeman, (Huntsman Arapahoe Hunt) last fall, the Masters sent LLH Festive and Casanova Interest to Virginia for breeding purposes. Our goal was to look for certain attributes that we thought important for the ongoing growth of our pack. In particular, we were looking for two qualities (a) reduced speed (we wanted a hound that was going to use more nose and less speed as he/she marked a line) and (b) bidability. We selected the Penn Marydyl breed and quickly set up to find a suitable mate for our interested bitches. We selected Thornton Hill Hunt, a private pack in Rappahannock, VA, and one of their stud dogs, Thornton Hill's Steve. Melvin Poe handled the logistics of ensuring our breeding program got off to a good start.

Both bitches were participants in the breeding program but as is sometimes the case with Mother Nature, only Festive is confirmed as expecting. Dr. Gerhman has confirmed that we have a healthy-sized litter but we do not yet know how many new additions to expect. We will pursue future opportunities for Festive and potentially Gretchen (she was the third option) for future expansion.

As with any new arrival, we are anxiously awaiting her delivery. Lennie is making all the appropriate preparations. More information will be forthcoming once they are here. For now we are all just patiently waiting!



*And did you know?* One of our very own LLH members, Karin Wineger has the cover story, a profile of Myopia former-MFH Russell Clark, in the revamped, updated and glossy new *Covertside*.

## Extreme Makeover!

*Have you gotten your latest copy of Covertside yet?*

If you have, you have seen just how much the official publication of the MFHA has changed—wow! Read on for Norman Fine's Letter from the Editor in the debut issue of *Covertside*

We hope you like it! Thanks to your enthusiastic reception over the past ten years, the MFHA has decided to upgrade *Covertside* in order to bring you a real foxhunting magazine—bigger pictures, more color, and a more attractive, reader-friendly layout. We have justified the increased expense to accomplish two goals (1) appeal to a broader audience and (2) become self-supporting.

We will continue to bring you the news, informative features, discussions of the issues facing our sport, and the departments you have enjoyed in the past. But for our sport to survive and prosper, we feel we must appeal to and obtain the support of a broader audience, such as landowners and the greater countryside population. The new *Covertside* will be one of the more important MFHA vehicles to achieve this end.

For ten years *Covertside* has been subsidized by the MFH Educational Foundation and has reached all foxhunting enthusiasts free of charge. Now, the MFHA's objective is to have all North America foxhunters become Subscribing Members of the MFHA. With that support and with income from advertisers, there is no reason why *Covertside* cannot be self-sufficient, thereby freeing up MFHA funds for the important work ahead.

The MFHA's Subscribing Membership program was initiated to give all foxhunters a way to help defend our sport. This defense will require a war chest of funds to oppose the increasingly numerous animal-rights-sponsored anti-hunting legislative initiatives that keep arising in states across the country. Your annual membership dues of \$35.00 will help build that war chest.

Readers who are already Subscribing Members of the MFHA will continue to receive *Covertside*. We sincerely hope that of our readers, by becoming Subscribing Members, will feel amply rewarded both by *Covertside* and by the knowledge that each is taking a proactive step in the defense of our sport.

It is our sincere hope that the new *Covertside* will give you, the reader, even more pleasure, will contribute to the financial well-being of the MFHA, and will be an effective voice for our sport to a wider audience.

—Reprinted with permission

### ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION YET?

The Masters of Foxhounds Association of America is the governing body of organized fox, coyote and drag hunting in the United States of America and Canada. Among its activities are: the promotion of the sport, the publication of a Foxhound Stud Book, the recognition of organized Hunts which have met its standards, the recordation of countries and boundaries for organized hunting establishments, the Registration of Hunts as a preliminary step toward Recognition. Receive *Covertside* with every \$35 annual dues membership.

**Masters of Foxhounds Association of America**  
PO Box 363  
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Phone: (540) 955-5680  
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# Meet the LLH

Meet the LLH is a new feature in *The Babblr*. Thanks to Carmen Gardiner for putting the questions together and asking for responses! This is being done in an alphabetical format—be looking for Carmen's email!

## Cathy Andrews

### **What do you do when you aren't hunting?**

Either selling real estate, or spending time with my family.

### **What is your first memory of a horse?**

I was around 3 years old, we were visiting my grandmother. She had a retired racehorse named Cricket, and (apparently) I made such a fuss about the horse that they let me sit on her. I still remember the utter perfection of the experience. My grandmother's oil painting of Cricket now hangs above my fireplace.

### **Tell us about your first horse.**

His name was Rusty. His name should be Saint Rusty. What a patient, tolerant, kind horse he was, and how I loved him.

### **How long have you been hunting?**

Around 30 years. Lucky me.

### **How did you get into hunting?**

I showed hunters for years—then I saw the hunt go out one day from Alpine and said "Ooh, that's for me!!"

### **What is your favorite hunting memory?**

A late fall hunt, all of the corn still standing in the fields. Lyman was field master—probably 20, 25 in the field. We came to a coop that landed directly into a wall of dried corn, then a 90-degree turn to go between the rows. Bob Scott made it over, then I watched as every single horse in the field quit *except* for Ben Jaffray's horse, and *MINE!* To this day when Ben and I see one another we hug and call it our "finest hour"—the day we were the field of two, our own private hunt.

### **If you could "steal" another member's horse, who would it be and why?**

I have a special fondness for Jerry Brost's horse, Winston. He just gets the job done, which I admire in horses as well as people.

### **When can you go country keeping next year?**

I have a determination to reopen the country around our house. Chris Mosley and I kept it for years. I love this country, and would like the newer members to experience it. So yes, often, whatever it takes.

## Cathy Belzer



### **What do you do when you aren't hunting?**

When I am not hunting, I am managing Pine Meadow Farm and riding my horse, Jackson, (preparing him for eventing competition), reading and playing my piano.

### **What is your first memory of a horse?**

When I was 4 years old and my grandparents took me on a road trip. Somewhere in Tennessee, there was a "statue" of a bucking bronco and they took a picture of me sitting on it. I've loved horses ever since.

### **Tell us about your first horse.**

I didn't get my first horse until I was almost 30 years old. It was an Arab named Randy and I rode with Pat Jensen. Ever since then, I have been finding more horses!

### **How long have you been hunting?**

I first hunted about 10 years ago with The Navigator (Max), a horse given to me by Jerry Collins. Max became Pine Meadow's favorite school horse for years and is now retired at Linda LeDray's farm, Misty Hills Ranch.

### **How did you get into hunting?**

Lisa Phillips was my neighbor and she took me over to the kennels many mornings to work hounds. I was hooked. Then Jennifer and I started Pine Meadow Farm and we began to bring a number of horses out to hounds and hunting.

### **What is your favorite hunting memory?**

My favorite hunting memory was after I had been hunting for a few years and I had only been riding in the second field. One day I hunted a horse named Dupont and Jerry Brost invited me to ride up in the first field behind him. It was the first time I jumped a horse while hunting. I loved it and it really is one of my best memories.

### **If you could "steal" another member's horse, who would it be and why?**

If I could steal another member's horse, it would probably be Jo Bolte's horse, Max. He is so pretty and looks so kind, I would feel very confident jumping and galloping him!

**When can you go country keeping next year?** I can country keep whenever you need me especially if it is on a weekday during the middle of the day.



## Karin and Carmen's Excellent Adventure

By Carmen Gardiner

At the Black and Blue Party, Karin Winegar announced that in two weeks she was going foxhunting in Virginia, and asked if anyone wanted to go with her.

My first thought was "Of course not! That's not the kind of thing Carmen Gardiner does! Run off for fun on the spur of the moment!" And was I ready for the big, wide world? Two seasons of hunting really isn't that much experience. But when we got home, Steve asked why not. And I really couldn't come up with a good reason not to! So Monday, December 13th found me on a plane with Karin bound for Dulles airport and the Virginia foxhunting country.

Our host was Norman B Fine, editor of the *Covertside*. He let us stay in his hunt box, a little house whose sole purpose was to put people up for hunting. Just the drive from Dulles to Millwood was exciting, driving through towns like Middleburg, seeing stone walls miles long, and coops built into fences wherever you went. The first evening we went to dinner at a restaurant that has been a restaurant/inn since 1728.

The next morning we got up, and got ready to go out with the Old Dominion Hounds. We stopped at the General Store for a cup of coffee, in full hunt kit. Instead of weird looks like you would get here, we had strangers come up to us: "Who are you going out with today? Looks like great weather! Happy hunting!"

We got to the meet and waited for others in a cow pasture, communing with the friendly cows. Many pastures in Virginia have grates instead of gates. Soon others arrived, including Kathy Baldwin, the second field master, who was expecting me. Karin was going in first field. We introduced ourselves to many members, and many guests, who were there from as far as New Jersey. Finally our rental horses arrived. It's a little posh to have a perfectly groomed, already-saddled horse handed over to you. Mine was Grayson, a black.

That day the huntsman brought the dog pack. One of the members told me that the bitch pack is usually more fun. The Old Dominion hounds are all tan and white, and the huntsman's horse is a beautiful overo that matches! The area we hunted was Shenandoah Valley cow pasture and creek bottom. We had to cross water many times, once down a steep bank, cross the water, up a bank and an immediate ninety-degree angle through a very narrow gate. Made me think of Bri Ceder.

In the woody area, half the hounds got on a fox just as half got on a bear! Second field didn't see either, but some could smell the musk of the bear. The trails we were on were damp red clay over limestone. My Grayson was wonderful. Lots of galloping. Second field did have to jump some little trees that beaver had knocked down, and a culvert lying diagonally in a stream. After about three hours, we went back to the meet. That day there was a very cold north wind blowing, so no one stuck around for tailgating.

Afterwards Karin and I went into town for a sandwich and then stopped at a little soap/cosmetics shop. The proprietor was an older lady. She asked how hunting had been (she used to hunt) and asked whom we were going out with the next day. When Karin answered "Snickersville" the poor woman was shocked.

"That isn't even a farm pack! It's an outlaw pack!" she informed us. Since neither of us knew what that meant, we asked Norman, our host, that evening. He told us how the Master of Foxhounds Association was partially created to set up territories for hunts. That way, a specific group is responsible to the landowners. A farm hunt usually is pretty good and just doesn't meet some requirements, like number of hounds. But an outlaw hunt will go so far as poaching on another hunt's official territory, leaving the official hunt to deal with broken coops, loose livestock, etc.

That evening we ate at a restaurant called the Hunter's Head, which is set up like an English pub, and the theme is If the Foxes Were the Hunters. We sat by a fire in the house that had been built about 1796.

Thankfully, the next morning when we went to the rental stable we found that we were going out with the Fairfax Hunt instead of Snickersville (whew!). Karin's horse was Allegheny, an 18 h. black Percheron mare. I will not mention any tack issues that Karin may have had. My horse was the bay gelding Alley Cat. The horses got to the meet later than we did, so we were allowed to free the hounds. They had about fifteen

*(Continued on page 8)*



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Greetings from the kennels!

All is well here at the kennels. It is pretty boring this time of year, though the weather has been good to us so we have been out walking quite a bit. We go out a least three times a week to play in the snow. (What a joke, where has the snow gone?) Even Lennie has been riding her horses outside when it's not too icy. Ask Goliath and Tarzan about the ice, a hound has to be careful when walking or running. That ice can be dangerous.

Lennie tells us that it will not be too much longer and then we will start to properly exercise to get ready for hunting. We can't wait! She also tells us that our hunting counterparts in England have been banned from hunting. To quote Lennie "it's bloody stupid" and we hounds all think the same way.

The sun is shining and I think I will go sun myself for a while. If anybody is interested in coming and playing with us call Lennie @ 763.684.0854. Hope to see everybody at the annual meeting.

—Gretchen the hound

(Continued from page 1)

the logo. It held none of the reputed Mercedes luxury. There were two bench seats sitting three across and an equally as large separate cargo space. We filled every square inch.

Our sixth and last member, Sherry Higham, landed on time from England. We loaded luggage and were off to choruses of “left left left.”

We drove north and east to the town of Loughrea, where our home for the week was O’Dea’s hotel. Ann and owner Mary O’Neil greeted us with hugs. We dropped luggage and set out to see the sights (and keep each other awake so as to conquer jet lag). I took them to Dartfield where our host for the week had developed a “museum to the horse.” There we met up with Willie and had a snack.

I have known Willie for 14 years and this was my eighth trip with him, the last being the Connemara Trail in June of 2000. I have bought horses from him, laughed and cried with him and grown to know his whole family. They are an enterprising lot. Willie has built a small empire in land holdings, cattle, sheep, horses and Connemara ponies. He is somewhat of a legend in the area. He is a consummate negotiator (also known as a horse dealer) and successful business man. While walking to the bank to exchange dollars to euros, I was stopped on the street by a local. He said “Yer out to Willie’s eh. Iz a ‘unting day?” Obviously you are a marked person in riding boots on the streets of Loughrea with the “Willie” ID plastered on your body.

#### Monday, January 10

The day dawned and tremors of fear plagued all the new visitors. I watched their faces at breakfast and the fear of the unknown was very evident on every face. We got to Aille Cross (the place where all the riding horses are stabled and where Willie actually lives) and began the distribution of horses. We walked up and down all the aisles looking at greys, bays, chestnuts, and roans with stars, stripes, snips, blazes and plain and in all sizes from little pony to big 17.2 hand beast.

Finally we were mounted and walking down the driveway to the lane to the forest. I could feel the tension easing out of all the riders as they finally felt a horse underneath themselves—a good familiar feeling. We rode through the forest and galloped on the logging roads. I personally was beaming. It is so comfortable to be mounted on a good horse and to view the incredible landscape. Ireland is called the “Emerald Isle” because the rain keeps the fields growing green year around. However get-

Three years ago the **Museum to the Irish Horse** opened its doors. Willie had a dream and finally it came true. Many years prior he had purchased 300 acres of land on the main road (N6) from Galway, in the west to Dublin, in the east. It had a wreck of a manor house and stable yard on the premises. The buildings were too far gone to be renovated. Willie and family (boys, Declan, Justin & William and girls Dorothy & Margruiete) have worked hard to build a cross country course equivalent to a preliminary course in the U.S. with some fences at intermediate level. He also pastures his herd of Connemara ponies and Irish mares. Each herd has a stallion running with a select mare group.

Willie convinced (I told you he was a negotiator) the Irish Development Authority (IDA), The Irish Horse Board (IHB) and the Irish Tourist Office (ITO) to underwrite this dream. What was built is a large building which houses a small café, a tack & accessories shop, ten occupied horse stalls, and large rooms for interpretive displays of the horse. There are carriages and horse-drawn implements. There is a room dedicated to the County Galway Hunt, known as “The Blazers” filled with history and hunting kit. There is an admission to enter. He gives trail rides in the summer and holds an international three-day event in June. When you visit during hunting season, you spend the off days jumping at Dartfield on the cross-country course.



*Hunt Princesses?*

*Back row: Cindy Piper, Sue Tallalah, Carol Brooks. Front row: Sherry Higham, Mary Kay Jans, and Sheila Strickland. Sherry lives in England. Her husband is the stud groom for the Beauport Hunt. Sheila is a trainer and dressage judge in Arizona.*

ting used to the slop and mud takes some doing. The reason farmers let the hunt come through their fields and hoof print the turf is that when the rain comes next, the marks will be gone

We finished the forest and hacked down the road into Willie’s test-jumping field. He takes his riders there so they can learn to jump stone walls. It’s called the Killinadeema Hill. As a grade school student Willie used to sit in the school at the bottom of the hill and dream about galloping the hill and maybe even owning the hill. Now he does.

We all jumped but Sue did manage to come off and rattle her brain for a while. We finished up and hacked back to Aille Cross and by the time we got there she was feeling better. We had lunch at Dartfield and then went back for second horses. By now it was getting dark and most of our ride was again in the forest and included galloping where every once in a while you could see the sparks from the metal horse shoes as they struck the rocks. Our two mile hack home was completely in the dark

Home... Back to O’Dea’s and dinner at Maggie May’s. The weather forecast was dismal. There was a chance hunting would be cancelled the next day, but if the hunt were to happen, we were encouraged to wear our riding macs because of the forecasted rain and wind. All night long the wind howled outside and the rain pinged on the windows. It was definitely ugly, ugly weather.

#### Tuesday, January 11

Hunt Fixture: Cashla (near the Galway Airport)

At breakfast Sue and Mary Kay declared that they would not be hunting. They planned to spend the day with Shiela (our non-hunter). That left Carol, Sherry and I to brave the elements.

*“Gale force winds and torrential rains put a damper on our first hunt preparation. It seems though that nothing and I mean NOTHING will stop the tenacious Irish. Horses were loaded on the lorry and all except me took off to the hunt and to face a new challenge. My courage (and desire) left me when the rain soaked my gear on simply the walk between the van (ours) and the barn.*

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

*I'll be interested in hearing the stories from the day by those braver than me.* —  
Mary Kay

Mary Kay was right...it was ugly weather. The good news was that during the course of the day, there also was an occasional ray of sunshine and beautiful cloud formations as each system passed over. I wrote the following to a friend upon return:

*Last Tuesday was one of the top five hunts of my life because the bitch pack at County Galway "The Blazers," accounted for three foxes. The weather was horrific with 60 mph winds, rain, and sleet. Someone said "The wind is so strong, it blows the snot right out of your nose." We jumped 40 stone walls (minimum) and galloped for what seemed like forever. After 3 1/2 hours I was glad to be back at the pub.*

*At one point the sleet was so horrific that while trotting home, the staff and those of us remaining (seven of us), huddled in the middle of a serious road because we couldn't get the horses to keep moving forward. There we were, ten of us, saddle flap to saddle flap with the horses trying to hide their eyes from the sleet (which was going sideways). The hounds were under Tom Dempsey's horse and up against the wall edging the road. We were there for maybe three to four minutes while traffic stopped in both directions since they couldn't pass. Then we moved on.*

When we got back to O'Dea's at the end of the day, we learned that the winds had been measured at 93 mph just north of us in Clifden and that a lorry (with a soft-sided trailer) had been blown off a bridge in Londonderry.

It clearly was a day to remember. There were seventeen in the field—eleven Americans, three members of the Blazers and

*Another story from another day about Willie Leahy, the Field Master... We got to a major road crossing and two cars stopped to allow us to pass when a big fuel truck hit his horn and pulled into the other lane to pass. Willie rode his horse to a stop in front of the truck and gave the driver a talking to. "You arse, what do you think you're doing? Horses have right-of-way on all roads in Ireland etc., etc., etc." The driver had his head out of the window repeating his expletives in the same tone as Willie. But Willie didn't move until all of us, approximately 40 riders, were across and heading down the road. It was a sight to behold.*

three staff.

Wednesday, January 12

Riding at Dartfield over the cross country course.



Sean (who works for Willie Leahy), Mary Kay and Sue

Thursday, January 13

Hunt Fixture: Peterswill

Today Mary Kay joined Carol, Sherry and I for the hunt. It was a beautiful sunny day and while I wouldn't say it was a great hunt, we did get a few runs and in my estimation, any day hunting is a good day.

Friday, January 14

This was the day where I could tell all the riders were weary. Willie ventured out toward the forest but then went west and eventually wound up going to Declan's Hill. What a thrill it was to climb and climb and climb and finally get to

the top to discover—a ring forte!

Saturday, January 15

Hunt Fixture: Clairnbridge

Today Sue joined all of us for the hunt. It was a good day with lots of people. I counted 60 in the field. We had some nice runs back and forth over and around a large wooded copse of 20 acres. At one point we formed a line to head the fox back to the huntsman but alas...Mr. Fox decided to go to ground.

Sunday, January 16

On the airplane and back to our real lives.



Ring fortes... I did some research in an encyclopedia in the news agent shop and discovered that there are over 45,000 of them in Ireland. They were the living quarters for a civilization from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> century and all of them measure 110 meters in diameter and almost all are on top of a hill. You can still see the outline of the stones where the wall once stood. The stones are covered with turf but clearly you can see the circle where once a entire civilization lived.

**Some random observations:**

There is something strange in watching a rider posting down the road with a cell phone attached to an ear, especially if it is Willie.

William Leahy's remark on seeing Sue for the first time and learning she had fallen off—"I'd like to be the turf she fell on."

Someone made the remark that if you need a "techie" (as in computers) then get a different husband.

Shiela went to the news agent to get a map and discovering they didn't have any asked "How are you going to make any money off the Americans without maps?" The saleslady replied, "Darling, not that hard, is it?"

On asking directions to the renowned St. Bridget's well "It's down the street with all the beer bottles and condoms."

We had a rare snapshot view of a nun, in full attire, sitting on empty beer kegs, waiting to be collected. It was a splendid sight.



**(We get letters, too, Norm!)**

What is the world coming to?

By now all of you know that they have banned hunting with dogs in England. The hunts over there are still going strong and practicing hunting in a "legal" way.

Have you heard the news about Wisconsin? They are trying to pass a bill that would allow you to shoot cats! If the bill passes, any cat can be shot, whether it is a barn cat, wild cat or the cat that you let outside in the daytime. Those trying to pass the bill say that these cats are killing off too many birds. Between 7.8 million and 219 million birds are killed in Wisconsin each year (an accurate number is hard to assess). The proposal, simply put, would reclassify free roaming, domestic feral cats as an "unprotected species" that could be killed by anyone with a license to hunt small game.



to

The rationale is that wild cats prey on songbirds in disproportionate numbers. On the other hand, birds harbor over forty types of parasites and can host internally over sixty types of infectious diseases.

So to sum this up they want to destroy about 20,000 hounds in England and now they are starting on the pets here in America.

The other night I was at the local township meeting. On the agenda was the local problem of stray cats and dogs. The board does not want to spend \$300 a year so that these animals can be dropped off at the local animal shelter. One board member then went on to imply that you should shoot the offending animal and basically hide all evidence of what you did.

Many people have stated that this bill will never be allowed and there are other ways of dealing with stray cats. Most organizations recommend keeping your cats indoors. My personal feeling is that cats were meant to be outside to chase and hunt. If you do let your cat outside, make sure it has a collar with a phone number on it and **please** have all cats spayed or neutered, so the population of wild cats can be contained.

It is a crazy world we live in, but everybody can do their bit. Study up on the hunting laws here in America. Learn the facts to do with hunting. If someone has no knowledge of hunting, inform them of the facts, not just your opinion and keep your ears open about hunting news. Because already the humane leagues over here are jumping on the English band wagon.  
—Lennie Williams

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(Continued from page 5)

couple. We had some wonderful hilltopping at the beginning of the hunt. The area was actually similar to ours with fields and rural homes.

Unfortunately, they are dealing with some of the same issues that we are, and more than one field was divided by surveyor's tape. As we went, it became obvious that my horse wasn't well. He didn't feel fresh, and he started coughing. When we got to a point where a member could direct me back to the meet via roads, I asked the second field master, Jean, if I could be excused. Poor Alley Cat! I did miss out on some of the hunt, but somehow hacking back along a beautiful Virginia country road helped make up for it.

We made it to the Hunter's Head in time for high tea: scones with clotted cream, cucumber sandwiches and tea. At the table next to us was Willard Scott (gratuitous name drop). That evening, after regaling Norman with our day's adventures, we went to the Ashby Inn in Millwood for dinner. Wonderful inn. After dinner we had mint tea in the library. When John Sherman, the owner, walked us to our car, I asked him if the Inn had any ghost stories attached to it. With true southern hospitality, he said no, but he would invent one for me if I'd like.

The next day we didn't hunt, but saw Norm off with his hunt, the Blue Ridge Hounds. Karin noticed that one of the hounds had long hairs on his nose and along his mouth. Norm told us that it's the result of Welsh blood and will show up for generations.

Alas! The hunting part of our trip was over and, after a stop at the National Sport Horse Library, we headed for the airport. Please note: between hunting and eating, we *shopped*. Each little town had tack shops, like Horse Country and the Tack Exchange (used). Imagine a store that has a twelve by twelve section of just men's hunt wear. Ah yes, that bit of plastic in my purse got its exercise that week, too.

If you are paranoid about airlines, skip the next paragraph.

At Dulles, after about an hour getting through security, we got on our plane, the last to leave for Minneapolis that night. Kathy Baldwin, the Old Dominion second field master, was heading for Minneapolis on the same flight. After the plane dithered around for a while with "weight distribution issues," we were told that the flight was cancelled. We were told we were booked on the 07:00 flight the next morning, but when we went to get our hotel vouchers to spend a

lovely night in D.C., we were told that that flight was completely booked. Karin managed to get herself, Kathy, and me on the 06:45 from Reagan. So we got to taxi to the Sheraton in Crystal City and actually were back in Minneapolis by 08:30 Friday morning.

So what did I learn?

- I was ready for the big, wide world. Long Lake Hounds taught me protocol so that I wasn't rude or dangerous, or over my head. My riding skills are just fine for second field in a live hunt.
- Karin is an excellent guide and teacher.
- Norm is an excellent host and teacher (he even signed two hunt books for me that he had edited!)
- Horses and hounds are, well, horses and hounds, bless 'em.





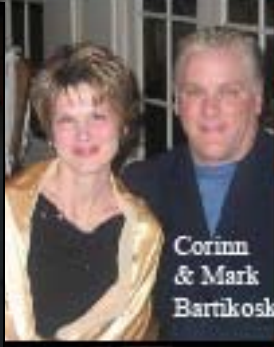
Scott Rosenbaum & Gretchen Pinar



Wandy & Ed Powell



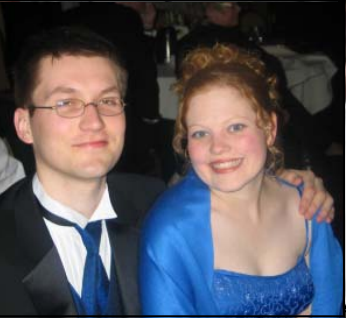
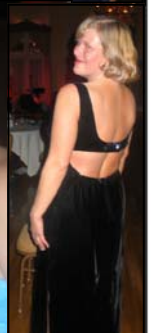
Cynde & John Oetjen



Corinn & Mark Bartkoski



Rachael Stone and Sam Nelson



Linda Murphy & Paul Johnson



Steve & Carmen Gardiner



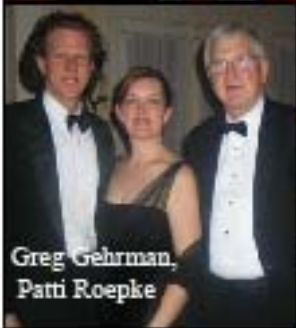
Caroline Brost & Shawn (fantastic dancer!)



Teri Nalobb & Jerry Eggert



Doug Hoskins & Emily Fischer



Greg Gehrman, Patti Roepke



ABE, Janis, LDR & Tom



Lindsay Baldwin



Erica Siewe



Gary & Mary Lou



Joanne & Dave

## Marketing / Communication Committee

After wrapping up work on the logo this winter, the committee is now looking forward to our spring activities. There will be a new Long Lake Hounds Membership Booklet sent out, as well as a new brochure that will become available for prospective new members. A major activity, coordinated with the education committee, will be the Larking & Hunting School, to be held at Pine Meadow on June 4 (Saturday) and on June 29 (Wednesday). Most notably, look for a new LLH HOTLINE number to debut soon.

—Jon Martinson and Karin Winegar

## The New Country Committee

Things are progressing well, if slowly, with our loosely configured group. On the pessimistic side, it seems that as soon as we find 100 new acres we lose 125 to some other use. It is a constant battle to stay even.

On the optimistic side, we have found several new pockets of lovely land west of Watertown. Large chunks of this land are held by horse people and their friends who seem to share our interests and are amenable to our sport. Emily Fischer has been invaluable in this effort, as she knows some of the key landowners.

Linda Ledray is doing a fine job in the Swede Lake area and, with luck, should be able to join that country to land surrounding the old kennel area. Long time members remember the beauty of the Swede Lake area. Chuck and Sue Thoreson remain invaluable contacts in the area.

Both the Watertown and Swede Lake areas seem to be easy to open – not dense woods needing major tree chopping efforts. Carmen and Steve Gardiner will be pleased.

Of great concern is the loss of country. Jerry Brost reports that several key pieces in the Medina area are for sale. The loss of one such piece can spell the end to a line. All members, when they hear of these “for sales,” should spread the word so we can find new owners—owners who will be open to our use of their land.

Much of country opening is following up on hunches. Each of you, as you drive around, must keep your eyes open. Can you imagine us hunting across a piece? If so, let me know and together we can follow up your idea and perhaps a new fixture will be found.

—Nancy Bizanno

*Were you correct? The two girls on page 2 in the photo are Heather Oetjen (on left) and Bri Ceder (on right).*



Anyone other than me think that perhaps Jon has been spending *too* much time with the hounds?

# Committee Reports

## Social Committee

The sun is starting to warm up the earth again, which means that our minds are again released to the joys of spring and riding our horses freely outside. We also start to imagine hound walking, cubbing on horseback and seeing people we haven't seen during our hibernation months.

This is the time to start thinking about our wonderful tail-gates, picnics, breakfasts or whatever, after the hunts in the upcoming season. Of course we are ever grateful to those members who continue to host their elegant "in-home" brunches or breakfasts, and we thank you sincerely for your contribution and support.

Last season we had more of our informal, "roadside" tail-gates than ever, and if you did not sponsor one, I encourage you to plan to do so this year so we can all contribute to this "camaraderie-laden" and joyful custom.

Although we have several of our usual social events already planned, I am open to any new ideas and very happy to discuss and work with you on them, so don't hold back 😊! Thank you very much.

—Marcia Brown

## Fundraising Committee

Fundraising activities are more directed towards raising money from special projects or events augmenting the normal revenues generated by membership fees and other similar sources. Last year we had a goal of raising \$5,000 dollars and were able to significantly exceed that. The Hunt had an exceptional financial year raising special monies due to generousities of a few of our members, for example the items Jt Master Cindy made available to the very successful auctions. Of course everyone recognizes the inkind and generous support of all of our members, but we pay the bills with cashola.

This year we need to look at more diverse (general membership) help in raising special funds and have planned so far a Master's Pace and two larking/picnic events that will be promoted to non-member riders, particularly eventing and Pony Club enthusiasts. Special event revenues help with the overall financial strength of the Hunt and leverage against the need to raise membership dues. Please promote these events to your friends and acquaintances (new members always welcome). Don't neglect being a participant yourself because the best part of our Fundraising activities is the *funraising*. Any suggestions for additions to these endeavors are greatly appreciated and can be directed to me. Enjoy the ride! —Jerry Brost

“ There are only two classes of good society in England: the equestrian classes and the neurotic classes. ”

—George Bernard Shaw

## ARABIAN STALLION



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**Contact:** Steve Gardiner, Phone: 612 385-5843, email: [stevegardiner@yahoo.com](mailto:stevegardiner@yahoo.com)

For Sale: TB/Percheron gelding, 10 years old, 17 hands, dapple grey. Hunts 1st and 2nd flights, trails rides, jumps anything. Hunted by teenage girls. Good home only! Joanie [jmastene@aol.com](mailto:jmastene@aol.com)

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### Remember!

You can access, read and download *The Babblar* at <http://members.aol.com/jmastene/Babblar.pdf>

### THE LONG LAKE HOUNDS HUNT HOTLINE

Are the LLH Hounds going out? Information available on inclement weather, location and times during walking, country keeping, cubbing and regular season. This is an unmonitored number so please do not leave messages.

**(952) 472-2743**

### THE LONG LAKE HOUNDS

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*The Babblar* will be published quarterly (October, January, April, July). All submissions should be sent to Joanie Stene at [jmastene@aol.com](mailto:jmastene@aol.com). If you wish to have your photos and work credited to your name, please state so. If photos are not sent electronically, and you wish them returned, please include SASE. We reserve the right to edit all copy received for typographical and grammatical error and to shorten pieces as necessary. We also reserve the right to decline to use or to hold an item for publication in a later issue. For items to be considered for publication, they MUST be submitted at least one month prior to the publication date.

## LLH Calendar of Events

- May 1 Annual Membership Meeting  
5:00 p.m. at the kennels
- May 4 Hound Exercising on foot for members  
Open to all members and prospective members
- June 1 Hound Exercising begins on horseback  
Open to all members and prospective members
- June 4 Larking & Hunting School at Pine Meadow (How to Ride Coops Safely)  
11:30 Discussion  
12:30 Mounted Session
- June 29 Larking & Hunting School at Pine Meadow (How to Ride Coops Safely)  
5:00 Discussion  
6:00 Mounted Session
- July 9 Cub Hunting begins Wed. & Sat. 7:30 AM
- July 17 Puppy Auction @ Piper's @ 5:00 p.m.
- July 23 Guest Day (capping fees apply)  
Country Keeping Day—post cub hunting
- August 7 Polo Classic
- August 13 Junior Hunt
- August 20 Guest Day (capping fees apply)  
Country Keeping Day—post cub hunting
- September 5 Opening Meet (Formal Hunting begins)  
Blessing of the Hounds  
@ David & Kitty Crosby's
- September 17 Junior Hunt
- September 24 Guest Day (capping fees apply)
- October 15 Master's Pace at Dan & Jill Johnson's
- October 22 Guest Day (capping fees apply)
- October 29 Junior Hunt
- November 5-6 Travel Weekend
- November 19 Colors Party  
B's on the River, Watertown, MN

**TBA—Larking Days (one of which will be in the Hugo/Afton area)**

LONG LAKE HOUNDS *Babbler*  
15120 South Diamond Lake Road  
Dayton, MN 55327

